



Conservation Conversation

Centre County Conservation District 2013 Annual Report

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The Centre County Conservation District celebrated 59 years of service to Centre County residents in 2013. The Centre County Conservation District was formed at the request of farmers and others in the county who were interested in conservation of soil and water resources and land use planning. The County was declared a Conservation District by the Centre County Board of Commissioner in October 1954. The District was initially organized to provide for the conservation of soil and water resources, assist in watershed protection and flood prevention, preserve woodland and wildlife, protect public lands, and to protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people within the community. The District is a subdivision of State government and is administered by a volunteer based Board of Directors. The District board is currently composed of four farmer directors, two urban-public directors and one county commissioner, along with five associate directors. In 2013, there were eight full-time employees. Some of the programs that the District staff administer include: The Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Chapter 105 Stream Encroachment, Dirt & Gravel Roads, Chesapeake Bay Program, Nutrient Management, Ag Conservation technical assistance, as well as sponsor the County Envirothon and Ag in the Classroom programs. Monthly board meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month in the Bellefonte Willowbank Building, Room 146 at 7:30 p.m., and are open to the public.

Mission Statement

The Centre County Conservation District is a committed, professional agency functioning as the primary local source of assistance to all individuals and organizations who benefit from the county's natural resources that we collectively strive to sustain and improve.

2013 Watershed Stewardship Award

~ Mike Savage ~



The annual Farm/City Dinner was held on November 12, 2013, at the New Hope Lutheran Church in Spring Mills. One hundred and thirty five guests joined together for an enjoyable evening of great food and fellowship. The Watershed Stewardship Award was given to Mike Savage; a Rush Township Supervisor. Mike has been instrumental in forming the Central PA SWAP Program to help protect local water supplies. A special thank you to area FFA educators and students for their participation in making this event a huge success. The table arrangements were assembled by the Bellefonte FFA and CCCD, using locally grown products from *Pipers Peck* in Bellefonte.

Centre County Dirt & Gravel Roads Program—2013

The Dirt & Gravel Roads Program strives to reduce erosion, sediment and dust pollution relating to dirt and gravel roads. Many Conservation Districts participate in a grant program to fund projects with the goal to minimize sediment transport from public roads—with a special focus on roads in special protection watersheds. Funding is limited to roads open to public use and municipalities that wish to participate must have personnel that have recently (within 5 years) attended the program's two-day *Environmental Sensitive Maintenance (ESM)* training workshop.

The Centre County Conservation District received 2 applications from 2 Centre County municipalities in 2013, for potential funding of dirt and gravel road projects. After site visits were complete and evaluated, the highest ranked site was selected by the District's Quality Assurance Board (QAB, consisting of representatives from the PA Fish & Boat Commission, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the District), and funded for a total of \$12,000.

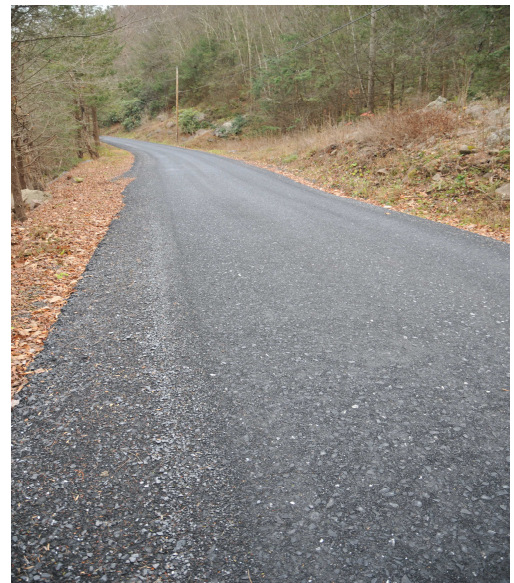
The participant with approved projects for 2013 was:

Penn Township: Approximately 1725' of Tunnel Road

- This project included installation of Road Base material, Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA), and stabilizing this length of road.
- The Centre County Dirt and Gravel Roads Grant Program fully funded the \$12,000 grant request for this project.
- Penn Township funded this project with approximately \$8,000 of their own funds for materials, labor, and equipment use beyond what the grant would cover—for a total project value of over \$20,000 invested on this section of public roadway.



2013 D&G Roads Project completed; newly installed DSA (Driving Surface Aggregate) on Tunnel Road in Penn Township.



Contact the Centre County Conservation District for more information regarding the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program or check out the Center for Dirt and Gravel Road studies website at: <http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/>.

Two of Four PENNVEST Projects Complete—2013

In 2012, the Centre County Conservation District was awarded over \$2 million from the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority (PENNVEST) Non-Point Source Program to install agricultural best management practices on four farms in Centre County. Two projects were completed in 2013. One completed project is located in Ferguson Township, and the other located in Marion Township. The two remaining projects, one in Spring Township and the other in Curtin Township, are currently under construction and should be completed in the first half of 2014.

The photo shows the resource concerns on the Ferguson Township Farm. Runoff from a 7-acre winter sacrifice lot was impacting Halfmoon Creek.



Ferguson Township PENNVEST Project (Complete)



A 40' x 144' Roofed Heavy Use Area (RHUA) with an adjacent 40' x 80' Roofed Manure Stacking Pad. Cows are overwintered on the RHUA, eliminating the 7 acre sacrifice lot which will now be managed as permanent pasture.



This dairy farm in Marion Township shows a 2-acre sacrifice lot used by 150 heifer and dry cows. An area of concentrated flow runs through the lot and eventually discharges into Cedar Run.

A 44' x 216' Roofed Heavy Use Area (RHUA) with a 24' x 232' x 8'2 deep under house manure storage structure. Heifers and dry cows are kept on the RHUA year round with an access to managed pasture. The 2-acre sacrifice lot will be managed as permanent pasture.

Marion Township PENNVEST Project (Complete)





Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Program

The Conservation District continues to administer the Chapter 102, Soil Erosion Control, NPDES permitting for stormwater discharges from construction activities, and chapter 105, Dam Safety and Waterway Management programs through delegation agreements with the PA Department of Environmental Protection.

An annual summary of program activities for 2013:

Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Plan (E&S) reviews.....	94
E&S plan Review Fees collected.....	\$51,213
NPDES General Permits.....	25
NPDES Individual Permits.....	12
NPDES Permit Fees collected.....	\$29,000
Complaints Investigated.....	39
Inspections conducted.....	120
Chapter 105 Stream General Permits Acknowledged.....	33
Chapter 105 Stream General Permit Fees Collected.....	\$4,975*

** The Chapter 105 Stream General Permit fees are new for 2013, as we started collecting these fees in May 2013. Also note, the number of E&S plan reviews, review fees, number of NPDES Permits and permit fees, are all lower than 2012 numbers.*



A Filter Compost Silt Sock provides a dimensional filter that retains sediment and other pollutants.



Grant Updates—2013

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation –Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant, Penns Creek Watershed

The Centre County Conservation District continued to utilize funding from a Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grant it received from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation. The grant funds are to be used to address resource concerns on farms located in the Penns Creek watershed. The grant for \$75,000 was awarded to the District in 2012.

Department of Environmental Protection--Growing Greener Grant, Little Fishing Creek Watershed

The Centre County Conservation District continued to utilize funding from a Growing Greener Grant it received from the PA Department of Environmental Protection. The grant funds are to be used to address resource concerns on farms located in the Little Fishing Creek watershed. The grant for \$312,432 was awarded to the District in 2012.

Department of Community and Economic Development –Watershed Restoration and Protection Grant

The Centre County Conservation District was awarded \$289,226 from the Department of Community and Economic Development Watershed Restoration and Protection Program. The grant funding will be used to address resource concerns on a farm in Spring Township, a farm in Halfmoon Township and a stream restoration project in Worth Township.

Department of Environmental Protection—Growing Greener, Plan Writer Grant

The Centre County Conservation District was awarded \$89,250 to contract with a plan writer(s) to develop Manure Management and Agriculture Erosion & Sediment Control Plans for Centre County farmers.

Nutrient Management

The Centre County Conservation District staff reviewed 4 new Nutrient Management Plans and 3 plan amendments. Six of the seven plans were for Concentrated Animal Operations (CAOs); one was for a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO). Six of the seven plans were approved by the District Board. One plan was deemed approved because it surpassed the 180-day review deadline.

Manure Management

The Centre County Conservation District has contracted with 2 plan writers to develop Manure Management and Agricultural Erosion & Sediment Control Plans. If you are in need of either of the two mentioned plans you can contact the District at 814-355-6817 to be put on a list to have these plans developed for your operation. There is an out of pocket cost of \$50 for each individual plan. The District will cover the rest of the costs through a Growing Greener Grant.

Conservation Update

On November 21, the Commonwealth Financing Authority (Act 13) awarded two grants to Centre County organizations for environmental restoration work. The Penns Valley Conservation Association received \$250,000 to further their group's mission of preservation and protection of the land and water in Penns Valley. They plan to install agriculture Best Management Practices on four farms in the Valley, restore 1.2 miles of Muddy Creek through a restoration project, and use some of the funding to support their stream monitoring activities. CCCD will work closely with PVCA on the farms in Penns Valley and we will help to implement the proposed practices.

The District received \$289,226. CCCD plans to install BMPs on two farms, one in the Halfmoon Creek Watershed, and the other in the Nittany Creek Watershed. They will also undertake a stream restoration project in the Bald Eagle Creek Watershed. The District will partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to repair a badly eroded section of Bald Eagle Creek near Port Matilda.

All of these projects will reduce the nutrient and pollutant loads to our county streams and help to preserve and protect the environment in Centre County. We are grateful for the generous grants that enable us to do our work.

Environmental Education—2013



Environmental education at the District is multi-faceted and addresses several generations. We have an active in-school visitation program with local school districts, teaching nonpoint source pollution to elementary age students. In the spring, we visit classrooms in the Bellefonte Area School District, and in the fall concentrate on schools in the State College Area School District. We participate in Penns Valley Environmental Education activities at the Muddy Paws Marsh and at the Environmental Center at the school.

We took part in Clean Water Days at the Black Moshannon State Park in April; hosting 587 students from Clearfield and Centre counties. Students from the Bald Eagle Area School District and Philipsburg Area District attended this event which was sponsored by the Central PA Source Water Alliance for Protection. Assistance was provided to Penn State's Arbor Day program which was attended by 600 fourth graders. We joined the Beech Creek Watershed Association when they taught 100 students from Mount Nittany Middle School about Acid Mine Drainage in the Snow Shoe area. Support is given to the education program at the Bald Eagle State Park by assisting the Education Specialist with some programming.

Our emphasis moved to the high school level when the District sponsored the Centre County Envirothon, held each year at the Bald Eagle State Park. District personnel also assisted this year with the State and North American Envirothons. The college-age population was reached when we visited a PSU class to make a presentation entitled "How to Fund Stream Restoration Projects".

Adult residents in the county were addressed through the sponsorship of workshops. The District sponsored two Manure Management workshops in 2013; one in January, and one in March. They were both held at the Centre Hall Lions Club. We assisted the League of Women Voters in organizing a Climate Change forum in March, featuring the world renowned PSU professor Richard Alley. During the summer months, the District collaborated with the Bellefonte Art Museum to present an environmental series entitled "Waterways—a Celebration of Nature". The District planned the education events, including arranging for guest speakers, that accompanied the three month exhibit of paintings of Centre County streams.

The District participates in county festivals, and exhibits a display at the annual Grange Fair. We co-host the Farm/City dinner in the fall. We also sponsor a poster contest for grades K-6. A seedling sale is held each spring.

Watershed Organizations – Activity Update:

There are many environmental organizations working hard to improve the water and land in Centre County. A summary of some of the activities that the Centre County Conservation District supports is provided below. For more in-depth information about these activities please consult the individual web sites.

Beech Creek Watershed Association: www.beechcreekwatershed.org

In December 2013, a Beech Creek Watershed Stakeholders meeting was held at Bald Eagle High School. Emphasis was placed on the many past accomplishments of BCWA and input was directed at the future of the watershed. The meeting was sponsored by the West Branch of the Susquehanna Restoration Coalition, a group that has been working on capacity building with the Beech Creek Watershed Association. Follow up meetings are scheduled to implement some of the many suggestions that participants made.

Bald Eagle Watershed Association: www.baldeaglewatershed.com

The Bald Eagle Watershed Association has been working with the Western Pa Conservancy and the Bayer Center on a capacity building program. They are planning to install a Canoe Access on Spring Creek at the Milesburg Community Park, with assistance from WPC.

Spring Creek Watershed Association: www.springcreekwatershed.com

This group continues to host guest speakers who present interesting and timely information to its members on a monthly basis. They continue to focus on encouraging water suppliers in the watershed to develop Source Water Protection Plans via the DEP Source Water Protection Program.



Spring Creek Watershed Commission

The Spring Creek Watershed Commission also hosts guest speakers on a monthly basis. Their meetings are covered by C-Net and they can be viewed at various times throughout the month. The Commission recently sponsored a lecture entitled Medications in our Environment by Dr. Andrew Peterson.

Penns Valley Conservation Association: www.pennsvalley.net

Andrea Ferich continues to serve as the Executive Director of PVCA. Jim Flanagan was recently hired as the Environmental Education Coordinator. Jim will work with the Penns Valley School District to provide environmental education experiences for local students at the school, on field trips and at Muddy Paws Marsh. The group has planted riparian buffers throughout the watershed and is currently working with the District on implementing Agricultural Best Management Practices on farms in the Penns and Elk Creek watersheds.

Moshannon Creek Watershed Coalition: www.moshannoncreek.org

MCWC is working with Trout Unlimited on Capacity Building. They have developed Acid Mine Drainage signage for public education outreach at three locations along Moshannon Creek.

PaSEC: www.ccpasec.centreconnect.org

The PA Senior Environmental Corps. continues to monitor streams throughout Centre County on a monthly basis, including sites in close proximity to Marcellus drilling in the Beech Creek Watershed. They conduct streamside analysis utilizing the Hach kits, colorimeters, and various meters. The Beech Creek samples are collected and taken to Lock Haven University where students analyze them.

Water Resources Monitoring Project: www.springcreekwatershed.com

Lori Smith was recently hired as the new WRMP coordinator. Under her direction the group will continue to monitor streams and springs in the Spring Creek watershed. An annual report will be published in the spring.

ClearWater Conservancy: www.clearwaterconservancy.org

CCCD is working with ClearWater to plan s Clean-Up Day, scheduled for April 26. This largest conservation organization in the county is active in a riparian stewardship program, developing land conservation easements, and in environmental education.

League of Women Voters: www.palwv.org/centre

The LWV local environmental committee has sponsored various outreach activities that have been well attended by the community. They will be planning an event for 2014.

Spring Creek Chapter of Trout Unlimited: www.springcreektu.org

A TU member, Art Kempf, recently completed a timeline of projects on Spring Creek from 1999 to the present time. The chapter completed a habitat project with the Pa Fish and Boat Commission on Spring Creek near Milesburg and they have initiated a Backyard Buffer program. Their new president is Bob Vierck.

Talleyrand Park Committee: www.bellefontearts.org

The park committee completed the Spring Creek Wall project this spring. They received additional funding for stream-bank restoration and they will once again work with USFWS to install some Best Management Practices on Spring Creek. One of the committee members, landscape architect Carolyn DuBois, designed a riparian buffer plan for the Park. The committee is currently seeking funding for the implementation of this plan.

Talleyrand Park Edible Garden committee:

The Edible Garden committee will be expanding the garden this year. They will continue to grow vegetables and herbs that are beautiful and edible. All produce is given to the Bellefonte Food Bank.

Central Pennsylvania Source Water Alliance for Protection: www.centralpaswap.com

This group has recently developed a new web site and created and printed brochures. They are planning to once again sponsor the Clean Water Days at Black Moshannon State Park. Over 500 students from Clearfield and Centre counties plan to attend. Central PA SWAP purchased water supply protection signs with WREN grant funding and they are currently working with townships and Penn Dot to install them. Their chairman, Mike Savage, received the Watershed Stewardship award from the Centre County Conservation District this year for his work in protecting our local water supplies.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Allen Ishler, Vice-Chair
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Tom Boldin
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Kaleb Wolfe

ASSOCIATE DIRECTORS

Al Stewart Susan Buda
Donn Fetterolf Lori Hartle
John Smith

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DEP EMERGENCY HOTLINE

1-800-541-2050

CENTRE CO. COMMISSIONERS

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CENTRE CO. PLANNING

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Ann Donovan, Watershed Specialist/
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Daina Beckstrand, CBP/NM Technician

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